the multinational companies for parallel marketing of LPG;

(b) whether it is also a fact that PSUs are offering their port facilities to the MNCs;

(c) if so, whether Indian companies will also be permitted port facilities; and

(d) if not, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPTAIN SATISH SHARMA): (a) The Joint Venture companies LPG-Caltex Ltd. and Bharat-Shell Pvt. Ltd. have plans to undertake activities under the Parallel Marketing System.

(b) and (c) The Oil Companies are offering their facilities for import and storage of LPG to any parallel marketeer on commercial terms, subject to availability of spare capacity.

(d) Does not arise.

Hike in prices of some petroleum Products

2451. DR. NAUNIHAL SINGH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have announced a hike in the prices of Motor Spirit (MS), high speed diesel (HSD) and light diesel oil (LDO);

(b) if so, the reasons thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that with this hike the oil pool account is expected to show a surplus by the end of financial year 1993-94; and

(d) if so, to what extent and details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPTAIN SATISH SHARMA); (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) In the current prices of petroleum products, the fulll costs of operatitn involving exploration, production, processing and marketing are not being recovered.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Opposition of Government's decontrol plan by private and joint sector

2452. DR. NAUNIHAL SINGH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that new refineries proposed in the private and joint sectors, who have already been issued licences are threatening to withdraw from the scene if Government goes ahead with its decontrol plan;

(b) if so, what are details thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that Government under pressure from the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) have worked out a plan to decontrol this sector; and

(d) if so, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTRY OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPTAIN SATISH SHARMA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Joint venture of IOC and mobil petroleum company

2453. SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Indian Oil Corporation and Mobil Petroleum company of USA have signed an agreement for formation of a joint venture company; and

(b) if so, what are the details of the agreement including authorised capital and the shares of the two units?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPTAIN SATISH SHARMA); (a) and (b) An agreement

nas been signed between Indian Oil Corporation Limited and Mobil International Petroleum Inc. USA to form a Joint Venture Company in India for blending and marketing of Mobil brand lubricants. In addition to blending the lubricants in the existing blending plants of IOC at Bombay, Madras and Calcutta, the JVC will also put up a blending plant of 1,50,000 MTs capacity at Asaoti in Haryana at an estimated cost of Rs. 47 crores using state-of-the-art technology. The plant is expected to be commissioned in mid 1996. The authorised and initial paid up capital of the JVC is Rs. 50 crores and Rs. 20 crores respectively which would be shared equally by the JV partners. The JV product is likely to be marketed by May, 1994.

LPG Agencies in Punjab

2454. SHRI IQBAL SINGH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question 350 given in the Rajya Sabha on 23rd February, 1994 and state:

(a) the number of cooking gas agencies in the country, particularly in the State of Punjab at present;

(b) the number of LPG agencies proposed to be sanctioned this year alongwith their locations in various States; and

(c) what is the number of LPG gas agencies that are proposed to be sanctioned during the year 1994 in the State of Punjab?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPTAIN SATISH SHARMA): (a) As on 1-1-1994, there were 4221 LPG distributorships in the country, out of which 176 LPG distributorships were functioning in Punjab.

(b) and (c) 623 LPG distributorships have been included in the current Marketing Plan 1992-94 to be put up at different locations in the country, of which 35 proposals are for the State of Punjab.

Approval of proposal for Bharat Petroleum

2455. SHRI IQBAL SINGH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have approved a proposal for Bharat Petroleum to raise its authorised capital from Rs. 50 crores to Rs. 200 crores;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(c) what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPTAIN SATISH SHARMA): (a) to (c) Government have approved the proposal of M/s. Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd. to increase its authorised share capital from Rs. 50 crores to Rs. 200 crores. This increase will widen the capital base of the Corporation and enable it to raise funds for financing its expansion plans covering both refining and marketing operations.

Handing over the work of exploration to Government of Gujarat

2456. SHRI SHIVAJIRAO GIRIDHAR PATIL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have decided to hand over the work of exploration of oil and gas to the Gujarat Government in their areas;

(b) if so, what are the conditions laid down for the same; and

(c) whether Government would consider giving this work locally to other States also?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPTAIN SATISH SHARMA): (a) Government of India have approved the award of contracts to Gujarat State Petrochemicals Corporation Ltd. Ahmedabad for development of 5 small sized oil fields falling in the State of Gujarat.